
Manner: SUICIDE

Suicides are those deaths caused by self-inflicted injuries. In 1998 in King County there were 201 suicide deaths, accounting for 13% (201/1507) of the deaths investigated by the King County Medical Examiner's Office.

Forty-seven percent (95/201) of the 1998 suicidal deaths resulted from the use of firearms. The number of gunshot suicides (95) in 1998 has dropped by 26% from 1994, which was a record high (128) in King County. Hanging accounted for 18% (37/201) of suicidal deaths, while jumping from a height accounted for 4% (9/201). Drugs and poisons accounted for 13% (27/201) of all suicides (see Table 9-3, page 88 for details), while carbon monoxide caused death in 7% (14/201) of the cases. More information regarding drug caused deaths is presented in the section "Deaths Due to Drugs & Poisons." Blood alcohol tests were performed in 89% (178/201) of suicidal deaths and were positive in 34% (60/178) of cases tested.

Looking at suicides in the elderly (persons sixty years and older), in 1998 this age group represented 34% (69/201) of all suicides. As in other age groups, firearms were the primary method of committing suicide for those 60 years and older (34 in 1998). In 1998 there were 5 deaths due to smothering with a plastic bag, a modality used frequently (but not exclusively) by older adults.

In 1998 there were 9 suicides among persons 19 years and younger (4% of all suicides), which is a 47% decrease compared to 19 suicides among this age group in 1997. Firearms were the primary method of death (56%, 5/9) for suicide among youth 19 years and younger. Hanging 33% (3/9) was the next highest method of suicides among youth.

Graph 6-1

Suicide Injury Methods in 1998

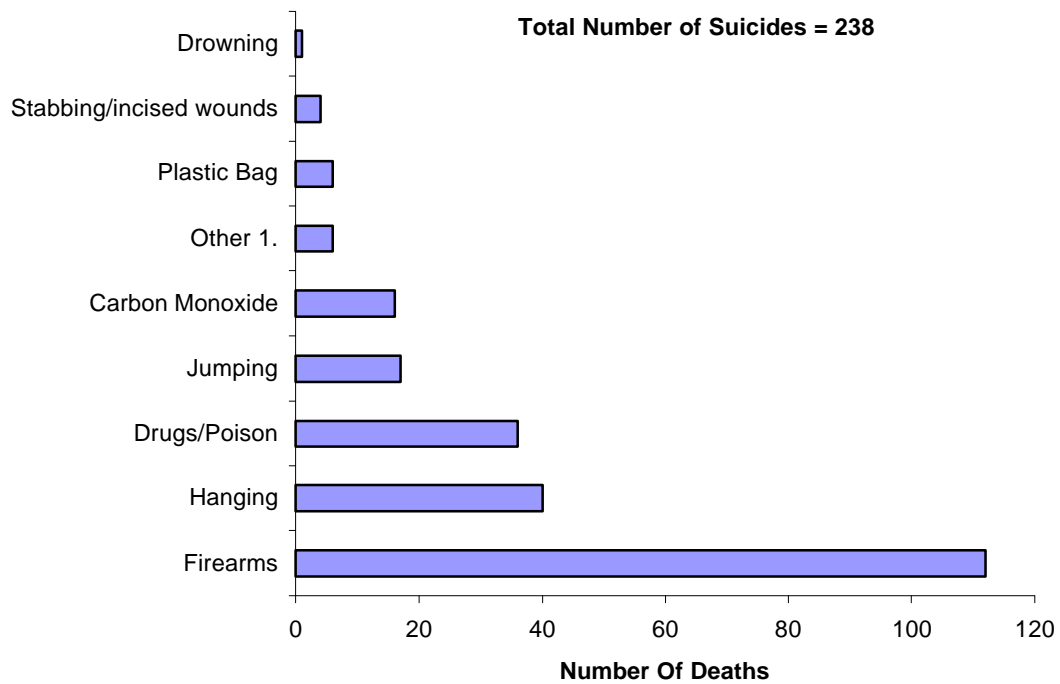
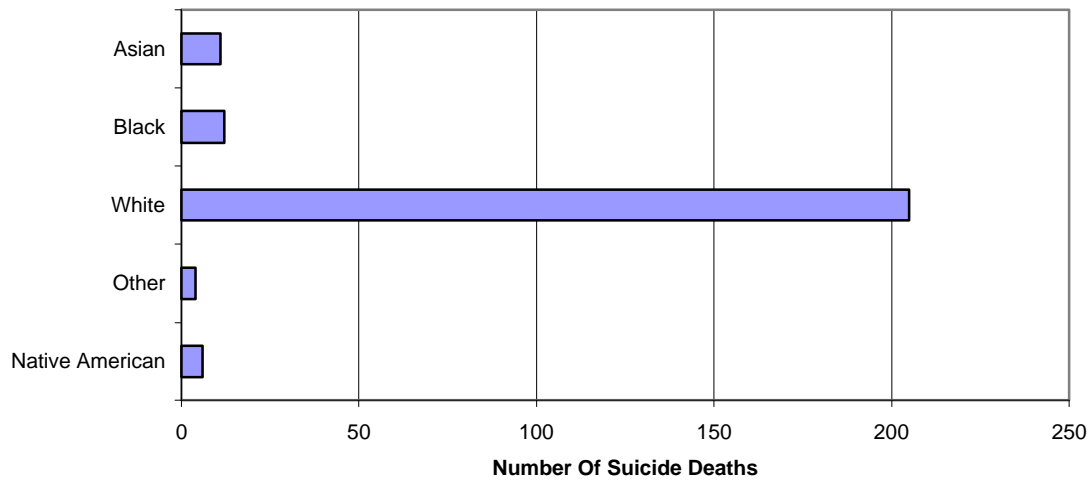
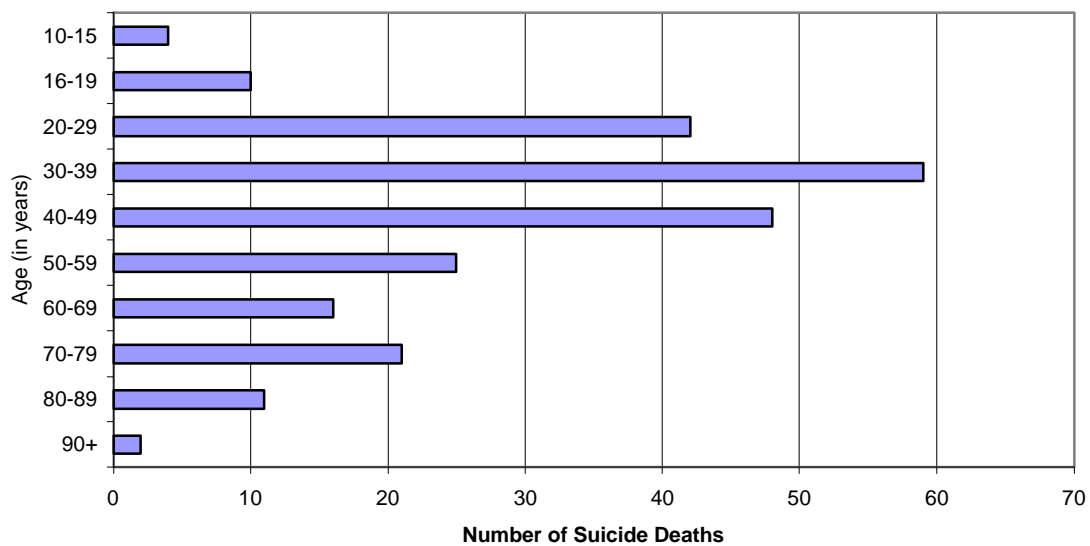


Table 6-1 Suicide Injury Methods and Race of the Decedent

Injury Method/ Gender	Race					Sub Total	Total
	Asian	Black	Other	Native American	White		
Carbon Monoxide	1	1	0	0	12		14
<i>Male</i>	0	1	0	0	7	8	
<i>Female</i>	1	0	0	0	5	6	
Drowning	0	1	0	0	2		3
<i>Male</i>	0	0	0	0	2	2	
<i>Female</i>	0	1	0	0	0	1	
Drugs/poisons	0	0	0	1	26		27
<i>Male</i>	0	0	0	1	10	11	
<i>Female</i>	0	0	0	0	16	16	
Firearms	7	4	0	0	84		95
<i>Male</i>	5	3	0	0	76	84	
<i>Female</i>	2	1	0	0	8	11	
Hanging	5	2	0	0	30		37
<i>Male</i>	4	2	0	0	24	30	
<i>Female</i>	1	0	0	0	6	7	
Jumping	2	0	0	0	7		9
<i>Male</i>	2	0	0	0	6	8	
<i>Female</i>	0	0	0	0	1	1	
Plastic bag	0	0	0	0	5		5
<i>Male</i>	0	0	0	0	2	2	
<i>Female</i>	0	0	0	0	3	3	
Stab/incised wound	0	1	0	0	2		3
<i>Male</i>	0	1	0	0	2	3	
<i>Female</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Other	0	0	0	0	8		8
<i>Male</i>	0	0	0	0	6	6	
<i>Female</i>	0	0	0	0	2	2	
Total	15	9	0	1	176		201
Percent	7	4	0	1	88		

Graph 6-2 Suicidal Deaths and Race of the Decedent**Graph 6-3 Suicidal Deaths and Age Group of the Decedent****Table 6-2 Suicide Injury Methods and Age Group of the Decedent**

INJURY METHOD/ GENDER	AGE GROUP (YEARS)										SUB TOTAL	TOTAL
	10	16	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90		
	to 15	to 19	to 29	to 39	to 49	to 59	to 69	to 79	to 89	+		
Carbon Monoxide	0	0	3	2	2	4	0	0	3	0		14
<i>Male</i>	0	0	2	1	2	2	1	2	1	0	8	
<i>Female</i>	0	0	1	1	0	2	1	0	2	0	6	
Drowning	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0		3
<i>Male</i>	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	
<i>Female</i>	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	
Drugs/poisons	0	0	2	6	12	5	1	1	0	0		27
<i>Male</i>	0	0	2	2	5	0	1	1	0	0	11	
<i>Female</i>	0	0	0	4	7	5	0	0	0	0	16	
Firearms	1	4	16	16	24	8	6	12	8	0		95
<i>Male</i>	1	4	15	12	19	8	5	12	8	0	84	
<i>Female</i>	0	0	1	4	5	0	1	0	0	0	11	
Hanging	1	2	5	12	8	4	4	0	0	1		37
<i>Male</i>	0	2	4	11	6	4	3	0	0	0	30	
<i>Female</i>	1	0	1	1	2	0	1	0	0	1	7	
Jumping	0	0	1	0	3	2	1	1	1	0		9
<i>Male</i>	0	0	1	0	3	2	1	1	0	0	8	
<i>Female</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	
Plastic bag	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	1		5
<i>Male</i>	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	2	
<i>Female</i>	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	3	
Stab/incised wound	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0		3
<i>Male</i>	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	3	
<i>Female</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Other	0	1	1	0	5	0	0	0	1	0		8
<i>Male</i>	0	0	1	0	4	0	0	0	1	0	6	
<i>Female</i>	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	
Total	2	7	28	38	57	25	13	15	14	2		201
Percent	1	4	14	19	28	12	6	8	7	1		

Table 6-3 Suicide Injury Methods and Gender of the Decedent

INJURY METHOD	GENDER		TOTAL
	MALE	FEMALE	
Carbon Monoxide	8	6	14
Drowning	2	1	3
Drugs/poisons	11	16	27
Firearms	84	11	95
Hanging	30	7	37
Jumping	8	1	9
Plastic bag	2	3	5
Stab/incised wound	3	0	3
Other	6	2	8
Total	154	47	201
Percent	77	23	

Table 6-4 Suicide Injury Methods and Marital Status of the Decedent

INJURY METHOD/ GENDER	MARITAL STATUS					SUB TOTAL	TOTAL
	SINGLE	MARRIED	DIVORCED	WIDOWED	UNKNOWN		
Carbon Monoxide	3	4	4	2	1		14
<i>Male</i>	3	3	2	0	0	8	
<i>Female</i>	0	1	2	2	1	6	
Drowning	3	0	0	0	0		3
<i>Male</i>	2	0	0	0	0	2	
<i>Female</i>	1	0	0	0	0	1	
Drugs/poisons	7	9	11	0	0		27
<i>Male</i>	4	4	3	0	0	11	
<i>Female</i>	3	5	8	0	0	16	
Firearms	29	33	21	9	3		95
<i>Male</i>	26	30	17	8	3	84	
<i>Female</i>	3	3	4	1	0	11	
Hanging	18	10	5	1	3		37
<i>Male</i>	15	9	3	0	3	30	
<i>Female</i>	3	1	2	1	0	7	
Jumping	1	6	1	0	1		9
<i>Male</i>	1	5	1	0	1	8	
<i>Female</i>	0	1	0	0	0	1	
Plastic bag	1	1	0	2	1		5
<i>Male</i>	0	1	0	0	1	2	
<i>Female</i>	1	0	0	2	0	3	
Stab/incised wound	0	3	0	0	0		3
<i>Male</i>	0	3	0	0	0	3	
<i>Female</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Other	1	3	2	1	1		8
<i>Male</i>	0	2	2	1	1	6	
<i>Female</i>	1	1	0	0	0	2	
Total	63	69	44	15	10		201
Percent	31	34	22.5	7.5	5		

Table 6-5 Suicide Injury Methods and Blood Alcohol Test Results of the Decedent

INJURY METHOD	TESTED		NOT TESTED	TOTAL
	POSITIVE	NEGATIVE		
Carbon Monoxide	6	8	0	14
Drowning	1	1	1	3
Drugs/poison	6	16	5	27
Firearms	29	56	10	95
Hanging	13	22	2	37
Jumping	2	5	2	9
Plastic bag	1	3	1	5
Stab/incised wound	0	3	0	3
Other	2	4	2	8
Total	60	118	23	201
Percent	30	59	11	